

UNCLAS HARARE 000326

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PDPA FOR DALTON, MITCHELL AND SIMS
NSC FOE JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR NEARY
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL PHUM KPAO KMDR ZI

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION IRAQ; HARARE

- ¶1. Under headline "Bush abusing his office" the government-controlled daily "Chronicle" dedicated its February 18 editorial to declaring that the current standoff between the United States and Iraq is about the control of Iraqi oil. "(President George W.) Bush and his Chihuahuas. . want to persecute the people of Iraq for their oil under the cover of human rights," the editorial stated. Adding "If anything, we believe that it is the American President who is guilty of abusing his office, imposing his will on the rest of us and grossly violating human rights." Excerpts:
- ¶2. "Those who espouse democracy would say that its major tenet is the happiness of the greater number. We believe that those who want to work against the happiness of the greater number would largely be viewed as dictators or autocrats. We refer to the unyielding stance taken by the President of the United States, George W. Bush, who seems intent on defying world opinion in his quest to pursue a parochial agenda of war. Bush and his Chihuahuas, among them Tony Blair and John Howard, want to persecute the people of Iraq for their oil under the cover of human rights. The world knows why Iraq is so important to American foreign policy. There is no need for Bush to throw a blanket over world opinion because the crux of the matter is that America is fighting to control Iraqi oil and President Saddam Hussein stands accused of standing in the way of that American dream. We believe the Americans should come clean on their involvement in the Middle East, where they are selective about the application of human rights. If anything, we believe that it is the American President who is guilty of abusing his office, imposing his will on the rest of us and grossly violating human rights.

"If there were elections to send criminals of war to the International Court of Justice, we believe that the world would have voted unanimously through the international protests directed at Bush et al. The verdict would be a foregone conclusion. It is about time that real criminals were taken to the Court because the world could do better without them. We are yet to see whether Bush and his boys will go ahead with their war plan against a defiant world opinion that believes life is more important than oil. This will confirm a view that we have long held, that, to quote London Mayor Ken Livingstone; `George Bush has never given a damn about human rights.' The 'war' is about oil."

SULLIVAN